

January 8, 2002

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF THE  
FY 2001-02 SESSION (ALL AFFECTED) (3 VOTES)**

This letter recommends goals and policies for the second year of the FY 2001-02 State Legislative Session, which is scheduled to begin on January 7, 2002. These policies and goals, together with other positions adopted by your Board, will guide our State advocacy efforts. They have been developed in coordination with County Departments, the Legislative Strategist, and our Sacramento advocates.

**THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve the updated goals and policies, as reflected in this letter and attachments, for the second year of the State Legislative Session, which seek to maximize State assistance, secure greater flexibility over the use of State funds, reduce the adverse impact of State actions on County costs, pursue increased State support for emergency preparedness and response, and promote economic recovery.
2. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer, affected departments, the Legislative Strategist, and the County's Sacramento advocates to work with the County delegation, other counties and local governments, and interest groups to pursue the goals and policies in the State Agenda.

## INTRODUCTION

As we consider our legislative policies and goals for the second year of the FY 2001-02 legislative session, it is important to review the current State budget, as well as the general economic condition of the State and its potential impact on State revenues, so that our policies and goals may be considered in a realistic context.

## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND STATE REVENUE PROJECTIONS

**Sharp Downturn and Anticipated Spring Recovery.** The fiscal condition of the State has changed dramatically for the worse since the start of the FY 2001-02 legislative session. A national economic recession that has been especially hard on California's technology sector, the State's energy crisis, and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have negatively impacted State revenues and costs over the past year, knocking out of balance a State budget that was adopted less than six months ago with the largest reserve fund in decades. In fact, the Legislative Analyst (LAO) indicates that the State is experiencing the sharpest one-year decline in revenues since World War II. In FY 1999-00, revenues increased 22 percent; however, revenue growth decelerated to 8 percent in FY 2000-01 and is forecast to fall by 12 percent in FY 2001-02.

The LAO projects a budget deficit of \$4.5 billion for the current year, despite a \$2.6 billion reserve assumed in the Budget Act of FY 2001-02. This shortfall is primarily attributable to a sharp decline in personal income tax revenues due to a decline in capital gains and stock options. The LAO projects a \$12.4 billion shortfall for the current and budget year combined based upon the provisions of current law. The forecast does not incorporate any impact from the \$6 billion in General Fund loans for electricity purchases.

The LAO projections are based on an economic recovery starting in the spring of FY 2002. Based on that assumption, revenues are projected to increase by around 9 percent in FY 2002-03. However, if the recovery is delayed, next year's deficit would be larger. A six-month delay -- from Spring 2002 to Fall 2002 -- would further reduce revenues by \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

Beyond the budget year, the LAO projects revenue growth of 7 percent to 10 percent through FY 2006-07. Despite these healthy revenue increases, the current year's projected

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\$10 billion gap between expenditures and revenues, which is based on the requirements of current law, does not disappear by FY 2006-07. Consequently, the LAO concludes “it will be necessary to adopt substantial ongoing expenditure cuts and/or revenue augmentations in order to bring the budget back in balance.”

**Approach to the Budget Shortfall – Special Session.** On November 14, 2001, the Governor announced that he will call the Legislature into Special Session in January to deal with the State’s budget shortfall. The Special Session will run concurrently with the opening of the regular session on January 7, 2001.

On October 23, 2001, the Governor issued an Executive Order implementing a hiring freeze and a reduction of general administrative expenditures to save \$163 million. On November 14, 2001, he directed State agencies to suspend allocation of \$2.2 billion in current year expenditures so that the Legislature could consider them as budget reductions in January. The cumulative impact of these reductions, including their impact in the budget year, could reduce the projected deficit by approximately \$3 billion. In addition to these steps, State agencies were directed to develop 15 percent reduction plans for next fiscal year. In December, the State entered into an agreement with the California Public Employees Retirement System to restructure its pension contribution for a savings of \$1.29 billion.

Given the massive nature of the State budget deficit, State assistance to counties is very much at-risk. Among the Governor’s initial proposed reductions in the current year are elimination of the one-time augmentation of \$25 million in general funds for local trauma center support and \$5 million for trauma system planning activities, delayed implementation of Healthy Families coverage for parents, elimination of \$42.2 million in funding for local parks projects, and reduced funding for foster care, public libraries, and energy subsidies for low-income consumers. These reductions have only been proposed and will require the approval of the Legislature.

In the budget year, Proposition 98 funding for schools is likely to be a key issue for the Legislature and the Governor, and it could affect local government revenues. **In addition, the 67.5 percent reduction in the Vehicle License Fee (VLF) is under review, with potential implications for local governments given the \$3.8 billion in State general fund backfill they are estimated to receive in FY 2002-03.**

A recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California indicates that residents now view the economy and terrorism as the most important issues facing the State, replacing the energy crisis. Despite the budget shortfall and the constraints of Proposition 98, the Governor and the Legislature are expected to focus on some spending increases to improve emergency preparedness and response, and to promote economic recovery through acceleration of critical infrastructure projects. As an example, the Governor has recently increased funding for local bioterrorism response efforts by \$5 million.

## **OVERALL STATE LEGISLATIVE POLICIES AND GOALS**

The County's varied responsibilities require an aggressive State legislative agenda to combat terrorism and mitigate economic adversity through funding for enhanced public protection, protection of vital revenue streams, and support for an economic stimulus package. The Agenda recognizes the heightened awareness of the critical need for disaster and terrorism emergency response, including enhanced trauma and emergency room capability, public health, fire, and law enforcement services.

**Protecting Vital County Services and Promoting Economic Recovery.** As the provider of last resort of health and welfare benefits to residents in need, the County has a strong interest in the recovery of the California economy. With its large population, the already high incidence of poverty among its residents, and an unemployment rate that typically exceeds both the State and national rates, the County and its residents will be deeply affected by the economic downturn.

One out of five County residents is poor compared to slightly over one in ten nation-wide. Over 30 percent of children in the County live in poverty, almost double the national average. These numbers from the 2000 Census, collected at the peak of an economic boom, will only worsen as the national economic recession impacts California. A recent economic forecast from the Southern California Association of Governments indicates that the unemployment rate for the County will increase 10 percent to 6.3 percent in 2002.

The County administers health and welfare programs on behalf of the Federal and State governments. Each year County health facilities admit over 298,000 trauma patients, provide nearly 3.3 million outpatient visits, and over 500,000 immunizations, tuberculosis and communicable disease tests. The County's Department of Public Social Services

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provides assistance to over 1.7 million residents monthly. As economic growth slows, these caseload numbers go up, which is bad news for the County budget's bottom line.

**Therefore, it is recommended that protection of health and social services funding streams that support vital County services, such as the VLF backfill, be a top priority, as well as support for proposals which would stimulate the local economy by accelerating or increasing spending on public works and infrastructure projects, especially those which would improve public health and public safety, mitigate hazards, reduce energy usage, or improve transportation.** Proposals to boost the economy have been discussed at economic summits held by the Governor and the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation. Among these are acceleration of capital projects to promote employment and consumer spending, accelerated release of State funds for capital projects, and an Infrastructure Bond to be placed before the voters as soon as possible.

**Ensuring Emergency Preparedness and Response.** These issues are especially important to Los Angeles County because it is the lead agency for coordinating the local response to emergencies, including terrorism. It staffs the front lines during natural disasters because it has the broadest and most critical responsibilities for the first response and coordination of efforts for disasters such as earthquakes. It coordinates an impressive network of disaster services which responds to floods, fires, storms, earthquakes, and hazardous waste incidents.

The County also has a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center that is staffed continuously and has specially trained personnel in its Fire District, Department of Health Services (DHS), Sheriff, and Chief Administrative Office. The Sheriff has obtained Federal funding for a joint City-County project to develop a terrorism response training course and other funding for specialized emergency response equipment. DHS has received funding from the Centers for Disease Control for surveillance and epidemiological response, while DHS's Emergency Medical Services has accepted funding for preparation of a Metropolitan Response Plan, pharmaceutical caches, and nuclear, biological, and chemical response teams.

Despite the County's commitment and leadership in the area of emergency preparedness, a review of the County's security needs in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks and

anthrax incidents identified over \$100 million in unmet needs that are beyond the capacity of the County to fund. The County recognizes that, to the extent that funding is available, the priority must be to sustain public safety, whether it is through counter-terrorism training for law enforcement, enhanced bio-terrorism funding for first responders, additional resources for public health and disease detection, and enhanced airport security. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County pursue investments in Preparedness and Response as the key priorities for FY 2001-02, and support Statewide efforts to finance preparedness and response activities through a Statewide initiative, provided that funding formulas do not disadvantage the County.**

**Heightened preparedness requires:**

- permanent and adequate funding for the Statewide trauma system;
- additional resources for ongoing planning efforts;
- increased patient capacity at hospitals and other health facilities;
- enhanced early detection surveillance and increased local laboratory capacity to assess biological and chemical hazards;
- improved communications, information technology, and coordination;
- enhanced planning for triage and transport management in the event of an attack; and
- increased capacity to meet the special needs of vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and the disabled.

**Enhanced response capability entails:**

- strengthening public health, including laboratory capacity;
- improving surveillance and detection;

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- first responder equipment acquisition, including equipment and training for fire, emergency medical, law enforcement, and hazardous materials personnel;
- anti-terrorism technology development and local anti-terrorism training;
- enhanced emergency response training; and
- mass casualty response.

### **SPECIFIC POLICIES ON STATE ISSUES OF COUNTY INTEREST**

Attachment 1 contains recommended State legislative policies addressing issues of major County interest, and Attachment 2 contains County-sponsored program-specific legislative goals.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The proposed goals and policies in this State Legislative Agenda are consistent with the County's Strategic Plan Goals, specifically Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Responsibility. Adoption of the proposed Agenda will allow the CAO and the County's Sacramento advocates to respond quickly to legislation and proposals that could significantly affect the County, such as potential new mandates, changes in major program funding, and reductions in local revenues. In addition, adoption will allow pursuit of legislation and/or support of proposals related to specific program areas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of County programs.

### **CONCLUSION**

The recommended policies contained in this letter and in Attachments 1 and 2 are submitted for your Board's consideration as the guiding principles for our advocacy efforts in Sacramento during the second year of the 2001-02 Legislative Session.

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The policies and goals contained in this package are in addition to, and are not intended to be exclusive of, other positions your Board may adopt. As in the past, the Legislative Agenda will be updated to reflect subsequent actions taken by your Board.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID E. JANSSEN  
Chief Administrative Officer

DEJ:GK:IGR  
JF:md

Attachments (2)

c: All Departments  
Legislative Strategist



## ATTACHMENT 1

### RECOMMENDED STATE LEGISLATIVE POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

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## **1. Children and Families**

### **1.1 Child Welfare Services**

Support increased funding for family preservation programs and reimbursement for children detained in county emergency shelters.

Support legislation that would streamline Dependency Court procedures while continuing to ensure the safety and best interests of children.

Support legislation that clarifies that agencies providing services to the same families may share case information.

Support continued eligibility for all immigrant foster children for Medi-Cal and State Foster Care program funds.

Support efforts to increase kinship adoptions and other initiatives which assure legal permanency for children in foster care.

Support legislation which would require the Dependency Court to proceed with hearings to terminate parental rights, when recommended by counties, in those cases where parents have also filed Welfare and Institutions Code Section 388 petitions alleging changed circumstances and those petitions have been filed after the statutory limit for family reunification services.

Support legislation that would facilitate successful emancipation, promote self-sufficiency and improve opportunities for youth aging out of foster care.

Support clarification of the Dependency Court's authority, after proper notification, to find parents in default when they fail to appear at Dependency Court hearings.

Support State funding of forensic medical examinations in child abuse cases throughout California.

Support legislation and/or budget actions that require and provide State funding for parenting programs aimed at teens.

Support proposals that simplify the Welfare and Institutions Code statutes regarding notice of dependency hearings.

Support proposals that enhance collaboration between child welfare and law enforcement agencies.

Support proposals that clarify social workers' access to dependent children's medical and counseling records.

### **1.2 Child Welfare Services – Foster Care**

Support regulatory changes which require foster family agencies to conduct duplicate address checks of their certified homes.

Support proposals that would simplify foster care program eligibility requirements.

Support legislation that continues equal treatment for Los Angeles County foster families under California Necessities Index rate increases.

Support proposals that increase flexibility in State requirements for foster care services case plans while assuring conformity with Federal statutes and regulations.

Support proposals which improve foster care by increasing the requirements for foster family home studies, requiring longer and more rigorous training for newly licensed foster families, professionalizing foster parenting, and providing adequate funding for these improvements.

Support proposals which assure that the educational system appropriately meets the educational needs of children in foster care.

Support proposals that would provide and fund substance abuse treatment services for children placed in group homes.

Support proposals that fund placements in for-profit group homes for dependent children who are eligible for regional center services when an appropriate not-for-profit facility is unavailable.

Support proposals which create statutory authority for appointment of receivers for group homes for children.

Support legislation that would provide child welfare personnel the ability to access FBI information for emergency placements when conducting criminal background checks.

Support legislation and/or budget actions which would allow the State Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division to make unannounced visits to Foster Family Agency (FFA) certified homes and fund positions to make the unannounced visits.

### 1.3 Child Care and Child Development

Support efforts to develop a master plan for early care and education in California, which addresses services for all children from birth to 14 years. The master plan should be inclusive of all stakeholders (such as parents, child care and related service providers, schools, local governments, and employers), future-oriented and multi-disciplinary in its recommendations.

Support proposals that ensure eligibility for subsidized child care is not subject to TANF time limits.

Support efforts to maintain services to CalWORKs families who are eligible for Stage 3

child care.

Support increased funding for the construction and development of licensed child care facilities in the areas where there is a shortage of licensed child care.

Support proposals that enable counties to design an integrated system of subsidized child care services that is simple for clients to access and utilize. These services should include information on the range of child care options available to families, support for informed parental choice of child care settings, and continuity of child care to families as they move toward economic self-sufficiency.

Support increased funding for subsidized child care services to ensure that all income eligible children in Los Angeles County with a need for child care and developments services, have access to quality child care services.

Support legislation or budget actions to improve reimbursement rates for subsidized child care, including allowing the Superintendent of Public Instruction to reimburse providers at a rate higher than the standard reimbursement rate.

Support efforts to maintain eligibility for subsidized child care services for families earning 75 percent or less of the State Median Income.

Child care services must be made available not only to current CalWORKs participants, but also to low-income working families who are at risk of welfare dependency (as allowed for under the Child Care and Development Block Grant) or who recently left welfare for employment.

The State must ensure the adequacy and availability of child care funds to support recipient needs as determined by work participation rates.

Support measures to provide local flexibility for the transfer of child care funds between the various stages to address funding shortfalls or demand for child care.

Support measures that guarantee child care subsidies to families who are eligible for subsidized child care, with emphasis on families whose income is less than the income for a family of that size to continue receiving CalWORKs.

Support efforts to ensure that the level of subsidy for Alternative Payment and CalWORKs child care programs allows participating families to utilize the broadest spectrum of child care options.

Support proposals that provide long-term, flexible funding for the development and maintenance of Family Resource Centers.

## **2. Elections and Voting**

Support legislation or ballot measures that would provide Federal and/or State funding for

the conversion of the County's existing card-punch system to a modern, technically advanced system that produces accurate and expeditious election results and that would ensure County funding will not jeopardize opportunities for State or Federal Funding.

Support legislation that would provide counties greater flexibility in determining precinct sizes.

Seek or support legislation that would require the disclosure of the identity of the payer for all telephone campaign messages.

### **3. Environment, Natural Resources and Recreation**

Support measures that provide permanent, long-term and short-term funding for beach erosion and accretion monitoring and for beach sand replenishment.

Support measures which increase funding for environmental protection programs and capital projects, including resource, open space, and shoreline protection, Santa Monica Bay, and beach restoration.

Support measures which, consistent with Board-adopted policies, promote the preservation of Los Angeles County mountain, river and wetland areas.

Support State funding to assist local government in conversion of vehicle fleets to alternative fuels to improve air quality.

Oppose legislation which would reduce AB 2766 funding allocations to local government that support fuel emission reduction programs.

Support, in concept, cleaner burning fuels and other technologies that contribute to meeting Federal and State health air quality standards.

Support measures that promote innovative projects and local flexibility and enhance local government's ability to maintain or expand cost-effective programs that increase vehicle ridership.

Support funding for construction of restrooms, parking lots, accessways, lifeguard and maintenance facilities, landscaping and other permanent amenities and infrastructure on public beaches.

Support the inclusion of beaches in the definition of parks, to foster the eligibility of beaches in park funding programs.

### **4. General Government**

#### **4.1 Retirement, Compensation and Benefits, and Worker's Compensation**

Sponsor or support local option legislation needed to implement employee compensation or benefit changes, as directed by the Board of Supervisors. Oppose legislation that mandates or authorizes compensation or benefit changes without approval of the Board of Supervisors.

Oppose legislation which would remove the Board of Supervisors' control over any benefit increases or decreases in the Los Angeles County Retirement System that affects the fiscal integrity of the County.

Support reform of the State workers' compensation system which would provide reasonable benefit levels and include appropriate reforms to ensure an efficient, equitable and cost-effective workers' compensation system, and oppose increases in workers' compensation benefit levels when not accompanied by needed reforms.

Oppose legislation that mandates eligibility of additional employees for safety workers' compensation benefits or safety retirement benefit provisions of current law.

Oppose legislation that creates new presumptions by mandating that certain injuries, illnesses, diseases, or physical conditions an employee may develop are job-related for workers' compensation or service-connected disability retirement.

Oppose legislation that expands employees eligible to claim a job-related presumption.

Oppose legislation that eliminates current requirements that employees demonstrate on-the-job exposure in order to qualify for workers' compensation or service-connected disability retirement benefits.

#### 4.2 Land Use Planning

Oppose legislation that infringes upon county board of supervisors' local land use decision-making authority.

Support the elimination of the exclusion of non owner-occupied properties from the authority to impose liens to recover costs associated with code noncompliance enforcement

#### 4.3 Animal Care and Control

Support legislation that would provide full local cost recovery from all new state regulations regarding the impoundment, treatment, care and housing of all stray and owner-surrendered domestic animals at public animal shelters.

#### 4.4 Child Support Administration

Continue to support the following principles concerning the administration of the child support collection program:

Support legislation that allows counties to relinquish responsibility for the local child support program to the State;

Counties, especially Los Angeles, should be held harmless from Federal penalties;

The State should guarantee counties full funding for child support collection program costs;

Counties should be held harmless for any error or omission on the part of the State, including failure to meet collection standards; and

The State should consider statewide use of the County's automated system.

Counties should participate with the State in the development of performance standards for child support enforcement.

#### 4.5 County Investment Practices

Support measures which propose reasonable changes to local investment practices in order to protect public funds, and oppose measures which unnecessarily restrict the ability of local agencies to invest prudently and to optimize investment returns.

Oppose measures which repeal the authority of counties to issue bond financing or other debt when viable and feasible, or which limit counties' ability to issue debt to refund outstanding bonds and thereby reduce the cost of borrowing.

#### 4.6 Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Issues

Support legislation that ensures the revenue neutrality of local reorganizations provided that it:

Does not change statutes covering LAFCO proceedings regarding special reorganizations filed before January 1, 2000.

Is not retroactive to incorporations that took place before the effective date of the legislation enacting the change.

Ensures that in any incorporation proceeding, one element of the cost of services to be assumed by the incorporating entity shall be the cost of those services provided within the area by the State of California which will, subsequent to incorporation, be provided by the incorporating entity.

Ensures the State of California shall maintain revenue neutrality by transferring to the incorporating entity from State revenue sources on an ongoing basis, an amount equal to the State's prior cost of providing those services.

Does not increase the duties and responsibilities of LAFCOs or dictate expenditures



for services without providing specific reimbursement through fees or from State sources.

Provides that in calculating the cost of service responsibilities being transferred in a reorganization, the LAFCO shall not consider those services funded from sources that were voter-approved or that, if re-enacted, would be subject to the provisions of Articles XIII C and D of the State Constitution.

Does not increase fiscal liability of the County in annexations and incorporations.

#### 4.7 Historic Preservation

Support legislation for the funding and development of the El Pueblo Cultural and Performing Arts Center on the County-owned properties known as the Antique Block.

#### 4.8 Library Services

Support budget actions which would fully fund the Public Library Foundation (PLF) Program commitment of a 10 percent State share of operating costs as provided in existing law; oppose actions which would reduce the current PLF funding level.

Support actions which would restore library district property taxes.

#### 4.9 Museums and Performing Arts

Support measures which provide increased State funding for the Arts.

#### 4.10 Education

Support legislation or budget actions which would provide State funding for school crossing guards which are provided by counties.

Support legislation that will require each school district to establish a process whereby a written agreement (a compact) commits the parent or guardian of a student to assist and cooperate in the education of that student.

#### 4.11 Public Records

Oppose legislation that imposes unreasonable burdens on the County or that would create unfunded mandates with respect to providing access to electronic records maintained by County agencies.

#### 4.12 Redevelopment

Support legislation which continues or extends the redevelopment law reforms accomplished in AB 1290 (Isenberg), and oppose any redevelopment legislation which

would cause the County to lose revenues or which would limit or repeal the provisions of AB 1290.

Support measures which strengthen required blight findings to stem demonstrated redevelopment abuse.

Support proposals which increase the statutory pass-through for taxing entities to make redevelopment more self-financing, or alternatively, provide counties with the authority to negotiate pass-through agreements with cities and redevelopment agencies on new (AB 1290) projects.

Support extension of review periods to allow counties and other interested and affected parties adequate time to analyze the validity and impact of proposed redevelopment projects.

Support measures which close loopholes that allow agencies to extend the life of projects beyond the statutory time frames established in AB 1290.

## **5. Health**

### **5.1 Financing of the Safety Net**

The County, in cooperation with other counties and providers, should seek a dependable, long-term source of funding for the health care safety net.

Support additional reductions in, or elimination of, the Disproportionate Share Hospital Administrative (DSH) administrative fee.

Support legislation that promotes the fair and equitable distribution of Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) dollars between public and private hospitals.

The State should use its share of Proposition 10 funds or other sources to backfill any losses to the Tobacco Tax's Proposition 99 California Healthcare for Indigent Program (CHIP) fund.

Support legislative or administrative changes that will allow the Department of Health Services access to additional patient financial information records (e.g., State Franchise Tax Board, Department of Motor Vehicles, etc.) which may assist the Department in its ability to verify existing, and/or identify new patient financial resources.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that will provide capital improvement funds, such as that currently provided for hospitals, to clinics and other public health facilities.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that will provide assistance to hospitals to meet the SB 1953 seismic safety requirements.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that will provide increased funding to

promote/market the availability of County health care services.

Support funding for technology infrastructure in public hospitals and health systems.

## 5.2 Emergency and Trauma Care

Reaffirm the County's commitment to the trauma care system in Los Angeles County and work toward a Statewide coalition to seek legislation or budgetary actions that provide increased funding for trauma centers.

Support proposals that provide permanent and stable funding for the County's public and private emergency and trauma care system.

## 5.3 Medi-Cal and Healthy Families

Support proposals that reduce the number of uninsured persons, and expand Medi-Cal and Healthy Families coverage to low-income persons such as IHSS workers, and juveniles within county probation systems.

Support proposals that simplify and align Medi-Cal and Healthy Families eligibility rules and application processes to increase and expedite the enrollment of uninsured families, including presumptive eligibility, and elimination of financial barriers.

Support increased State funding of Medi-Cal and Healthy Families outreach, enrollment, and retention activities.

Support proposals that permit counties and school districts to provide the State matching component to exercise the Federal waiver provisions for: 1) the purchase of family coverage, and/or 2) a cost-effective alternative using a community-based health delivery system.

Support proposals that allow counties to use Healthy Families monies to provide a comprehensive continuum of mental health and public health nursing services for children in the public's care.

Support the State's pursuit of a Healthy Families a waiver for the purchase of family coverage where it is cost-effective and does not "crowd out" other health insurance coverage.

Support legislation and/or budget actions which continue State funding for prenatal services to undocumented women

Support legislation to expand the substance abuse benefit for children and parents.

Support pursuit of sufficient State matching funds and the expansion of eligibility and/or

increase provider payment rates in order to utilize its entire annual Federal allotments which, under Federal law, must be expended within three years.

Support legislation to simplify and expand eligibility to Medi-Cal such as eliminating the asset tests for the 1931 (b) Medi-Cal Program, increasing the income eligibility level to 133% of the federal poverty level for all children ages one through eighteen and parents; and expanding twelve months of continuous Medi-Cal coverage to include parents.

Support proposals to which require the State to pursue reform of Medicaid, including its DSH and Section 1115 Waiver components, to increase public hospital and health care system flexibility in redirecting Medicaid funds to priority emphasis areas, such as primary and preventive health care, without jeopardizing total available Medicaid funding levels.

Support proposals that increase the Medi-Cal Maintenance Need Income Level to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and require the State annually adjust the Medi-Cal Maintenance Need Income Level when the FPL is adjusted.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that preserve 100 percent cost-based reimbursement for Federally Qualified Health Centers.

Support legislation or budgetary actions to assist local programs to combat Medi-Cal fraud.

#### 5.4 Health Insurance and Coverage

Support proposals which require public and private insurers should be required to offer full coverage for all health services including prenatal care, contraceptives, and screening for diabetes, hypertension, cervical and breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, STDs and mental health.

Support proposals which provide incentives for small businesses to offer quality health coverage for employees and their dependents, such as allowing small businesses to use both public and private purchasing pools on a regional or county level.

Support increased funding to develop demonstration projects within small businesses to increase enrollment in existing health insurance coverage programs.

Support enhanced access to prescription drugs for low-income uninsured persons.

#### 5.5 Public Health

Support measures that provide funding to enhance preparedness of the public health system to respond to chemical, biological, and other forms of terrorism.

Support proposals which promote a stable supply of medications, medical supplies, and blood products.

Support increased funding for public health activities including, immunizations, tuberculosis, maternal and child health, family planning, sexually transmitted disease, childhood lead poisoning prevention, injury and violence prevention, food safety, and chronic disease

programs.

Support enhanced funding for HIV surveillance activities, and to address increasing HIV/AIDS caseloads in minority communities.

Support proposals which establish a scientifically-based legal limit of total Chromium in drinking water supplies.

Support legislation which would require school districts and public park agencies to inspect their facilities on a regular basis for lead paint and then report their findings to County health offices and comply with requirements set by State and County childhood lead abatement programs.

#### 5.6 Health Training and Education

Seek an amendment to the education Code to permit the Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health to receive State funding as do nursing programs in community colleges, or alternatively seek funding for the college in the State budget.

Support enhanced funding for nursing education and training slots at public universities and teaching hospitals, recruitment and retention of nurses, and recruitment of physicians into medically underserved areas.

#### 5.7 Women's Health

Create and enforce state and county cultural and linguistic competence standards for all health service programs in order to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care responsive to all women.

Support proposals to enhance funding for the development and delivery of child care and transportation services that will enable all women to obtain timely and adequate health services.

### **6. Housing and Community Development**

Support proposals that provide incentives to local government and/or developers to increase affordable housing.

Support proposals that increase home ownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families, and employees in vital occupations.

Support proposals that increase housing and supportive services for special needs populations.

Support measures that end predatory lending practices.

Support measures that promote economic incentives as a means of attracting or retaining

business in the County, and jobs in high poverty and unemployment areas.

Support proposals which would stimulate the local economy by accelerating or increasing spending on public works and infrastructure projects, especially those which would improve public health and public safety, mitigate hazards, reduce energy usage, or improve transportation.

## **7. Justice and Public Safety**

Support legislation that would reimburse County costs associated with the prosecution and defense of new crimes.

Support increased State funding for multi-agency collaborative justice programs.

Support full funding of the Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) Program.

### **7.1 Proposition 36**

Despite Proposition 36's prohibition on the utilization of its funds for drug testing, pursue State commitment for other resources to ensure that drug testing is available to ensure program compliance.

Given the unprecedented influx of probationers requiring both investigation and supervision as a result of Proposition 36, additional resources should be committed, as necessary, to ensure that Probation workload staffing ratios do not increase.

To meet demands placed on local treatment services, pursue a commitment of additional funding, without supplantation of existing resources, to ensure full access to adequate and meaningful Proposition 36 services.

County maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements under Trial Court Funding should not change as a result of Proposition 36.

Oppose any effort to require counties to use their Proposition 36 allocations to provide treatment to State parolees.

Support additional resources for the mental health treatment required by those defendants who are dually diagnosed and are not already part of a county's mental health program, and for treatment of discovered diseases that are a public health concern.

To ensure maximum Proposition 36 funding for treatment services, pursue the State's provision of supplemental funding to cover increased county costs for the administration of contracts with qualified treatment providers.

Despite the fact that Proposition 36's funding sunsets in 2005-06, pursue continued State funding as long as the mandate remains in effect.

Support the prohibition against using Proposition 36 funding for drug treatment programs

offered in a prison or jail facility, excluding those drug treatment services provided to defendants who are a part of an electronic monitoring system (EMS) program.

Support relaxation of the Proposition 36 restrictions on jail-based treatment programs if such programs are part of an overall system of graduated short-term therapeutic sanctions supervised by the Courts and provided in a dedicated treatment unit of a county jail.

Support the prohibition of probation under Proposition 36 for defendants convicted of illegally possessing a firearm while either under the influence of drugs, possession of psychosedative (date rape) drugs, or simply in possession of illegal drugs for personal use.

## 7.2 Trial Court Funding

Support measures which would increase the State's participation in trial court funding through the assumption of responsibility for financing court facility construction and maintenance.

Support measures which would require the State to fully fund any additional court costs incurred in implementing Proposition 36.

Support increased State funding for drug courts with expansion to pre-plea drug court programs.

Support legislation that would permit the use of public funds for electronic court reporting.

## 7.3 Crime Lab

Support legislation that provides funding for the construction, renovation and operation of forensic crime laboratories.

## 7.4 Emergency Management and Operations

Support legislation or regulation that establishes statewide standards for implementation and governance of 3-1-1 programs (non-emergency reporting and general government services) and 2-1-1 programs (community information and referral services).

Support measures which would provide financial assistance to local agencies for the acquisition of thermal imaging equipment which would enable emergency response agencies to identify and locate targets in limited visibility environments.

## 7.5 Fire

Support measures which provide State financial assistance to local governments for the acquisition of fire apparatus, including rotary and fixed-wing aircraft.

## 7.6 Juvenile Justice

Support proposals that assure that each county shall receive annual Federal TANF block grant funding for emergency assistance (EA) for juvenile probation services in an amount at least equal to that received by counties in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 1995. (Note: The State's annual TANF block grant includes funding equal to the amount of Federal AFDC-EA funds received by the State in FFY 1995 which matched counties' emergency assistance costs.)

Support increased State funding for transitional housing programs for delinquent youth.

Support measures which would expand truancy programs.

Support increased funding for programs for delinquent and/or emotionally disturbed minors who require intensive case management services or for alternative camp placement including public/private partnerships.

Support measures that provide funding for the construction, renovation, rehabilitation and operation of juvenile justice facilities, inclusive of camps, ranches and halls.

Support measures that provide funding for prevention and intervention programs for youth who are at risk of becoming involved, or are currently involved in the juvenile justice system.

Support funding for programs, services and facilities that provide a continuum of mental health services to detained minors, including mental health screenings, assessments and treatment services.

Support funding for information technology initiatives such as applications and software development that would allow juvenile justice agencies to integrate, upgrade and maintain justice systems.

Support increased funding for the High-Risk Youth Education and Safety Plan which funds services to youths transitioning from juvenile camps and ranches

Support full funding of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Program for 12 sites.

## 7.7 Probation

Support State funding for the Developing Increased Safety through Arms Recovery Management (DISARM) Program.

Oppose any reduction in probation funding below the level established in the 1998-99 State Budget.

Support legislation that assists probation departments in verifying that sex offenders and arsonists register with local law enforcement agencies as required by insuring that



probation departments are notified of violators who report directly to court.

Oppose measures that impose an unfunded mandate to reduce probation officer caseloads.

Support measures that hold convicted persons accountable for the costs of probation services based on an ability to pay.

## **8. Maintenance of Effort/Mandate Relief**

Support limiting State administrative fees to the State's actual costs for mandated administration.

Support streamlining or elimination of administrative mandates to focus limited resources on vital services.

Oppose new unfunded mandates which do not further a higher priority.

Oppose any measure that would increase the County's Trial Court Funding maintenance of effort above the agreement reached in AB 233 (Escutia) and subsequent actions providing additional MOE relief.

Oppose any measure that would earmark or otherwise encumber the discretionary revenues made available to counties through the enactment of AB 233 (Escutia) and subsequent actions providing additional MOE relief.

Support proposals that would allow counties to apply for maintenance-of-effort relief in those instances where facility costs are included in the maintenance-of-effort base and remain an ongoing County responsibility.

## **9. Mental Health**

Support legislation that provides mental health benefits coverage comparable to that provided for physical illnesses.

Work with the Legislature on efforts to reform the Lanterman Petris Short Act and other current law aimed at assisting and protecting the mentally ill.

Adequate funding for treatment and services must accompany efforts to provide involuntary mental health treatment.

Support legislation to fund mental health services for children including children's systems of care, multi disciplinary approaches and training, Community Treatment Facilities, treatment for juvenile offenders, coordination of transitional youth services, and school based mental health services.

Support legislation to fund mental health services for adults and older adults including adult

and homeless systems of care, Adult Protective Services, substance abuse treatment, Institutions for Mental Diseases reform, joint law enforcement and mental health teams, and expansion of the Healthy Families Program to include parents.

Increase the Healthy Families Program mental health benefit to meet State standards for provision of mental health services by a public agency.

Support legislation to provide mental health services to CalWORKs recipients, expand mental health parity, multi-agency training and coordination for suicide prevention, emergency services for disaster relief response, and funding for development and recruitment of additional mental health professionals.

Support increased funding for specialized mental health training to law enforcement personnel and probation officers.

Support increased funding for prevention, diversion, and intervention services for mentally ill adults, and delinquent and/or emotionally disturbed minors to divert them from the criminal justice system.

## **10. Revenue and Taxation**

Pursue full State funding of the school's share of the property tax administration program which is unencumbered by repayment requirements or MOEs.

Support proposals to mitigate County exposure to property tax refunds on State-assessed properties, including the establishment of rebuttable presumptions or correctness for values established within a defined range of "fair market value."

Support legislation that establishes a Statewide procedure for notifying property owners of outstanding tax obligations within a reasonable time period after conclusion of a property sale, and that penalties and interest will only be applied if the property owner then fails to pay on time, provided that mandate reimbursement is provided to counties.

Pursue legislation clarifying that, prospectively, interest on property tax refunds shall be computed from the date of payment of each installment.

Seek legislation clarifying that property tax refund issues are not to be the subject of class action suits.

Support legislation and regulation that uniformly applies tax and fee burdens on utilities and similarly situated companies competing in California to avoid creation of unfair competitive advantages.

Support a constitutional protection of the monies counties receive as specified in the Vehicle License Fee Law.

Support legislative efforts to distribute growth in sales tax revenues on a per-capita or other

basis that acknowledges the service responsibilities of counties and their disproportionate losses under the property tax shifts.

Regarding Proposition 218, support legislation that clarifies that street lighting is covered by the same exemptions provided to streets and sidewalks, conforms existing statutory assessment levy requirements to those established by Proposition 218, and clarifies that failed passage of an assessment increase submitted to property owners under Proposition 218 does not constitute a referendum on the existing levy.

Support legislation that protects the County from refund claims based upon the application of Proposition 62 to taxes imposed by the County in reliance upon applicable case law regarding the unconstitutionality of Proposition 62.

Support proposals to expand the type of debt that can be referred to the California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) intercept program to include debts owed to the County Probation Department and the Department of Health Services, and enable the County to access FTB tax return information for collection purposes.

Support proposals that allow local government to negotiate compensation for the use of rights-of-way by telecommunication companies.

Support legislation that provides for the State Board of Equalization to retain sole responsibility for determining whether or not an organization may qualify for property tax welfare exemptions and that counties have sole responsibility for verifying that uses of individual properties qualify for welfare exemptions. Oppose legislation that would require organizations to file for welfare exempt status in individual counties before evaluation of individual property uses.

Support legislation that would simplify property assessment practices by applying revocable living trust reporting requirements to family limited partnerships.

Support legislation that clarifies that, in addition to the right to inspect an assessee's records for purposes of assessment, an assessor also has the right to copy those records.

Oppose legislation that establishes a trial de novo solution for property tax appeals.

Support legislation requiring marina or storage facility operators to report vessels at their location when required by the county assessor in order to complete local assessments.

## **11. Social Services**

### **11.1 Reforming the Safety Net and Promoting Self-Sufficiency**

Support proposals in which the State and local governments work together in partnership to balance resources, eligibility and benefits and forge new partnerships with business, nonprofit, and religious organizations to promote individual self-sufficiency.

Support proposals that allocate block grant funds based on actual costs and caseloads for various functions such as assistance grants and employment services.

Support a single integrated safety net which pools Federal, State, and county resources.

Support the maintenance of a Statewide safety net, as counties cannot afford to aid persons who are ineligible for Federal benefits under welfare reform.

To support the safety net and to successfully implement welfare reform, pursue the use any savings from welfare reform to finance safety net services, especially for vulnerable persons losing Federal eligibility who otherwise would be a County responsibility under Section 17000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

The Statewide safety net should cover legal immigrants while holding sponsors, who are available and able to pay, financially liable for sponsored immigrants.

Support increased funding for the provision of services to non-custodial parents to help them meet their responsibilities to their children, including services aimed at increasing the parents' income, payment of child support, parenting skills, and positive relationships with their children.

Support legislation or budgetary measures which would lift the cap on State FSET funding and require the State to fund the full non-Federal match.

Pursue all options under welfare reform to assure maximization of Federal funding such as Medicaid, Food Stamps, child support, and child care.

Pursue options to simplify the administration of public assistance programs such as CalWORKs, Medi-Cal and Food Stamps, including seeking any necessary Federal waivers.

Counties must be held harmless from any Federal penalties for reasons beyond their control; this includes inadequate Federal and State funding to meet requirements or the lack of clear Federal and State program instructions.

Pursue adequate funding to counties to cover new Federal mandates for data collection, verification, reporting, and fraud detection systems. Priority must be given to funding for previously approved automated systems in the State such as the County's LEADER project, which automates eligibility determination and streamlines case management.

### 11.2 CalWORKs

Promote economic self-sufficiency through partnerships with public, private, nonprofit, and religious organizations to not only hire CalWORKs participants, but also to offer limited community service and work experience opportunities.

Enable counties to develop coordinated systems, which include, but are not limited to, Employment Development Department and Department of Social Services programs to

assess CalWORKs participants, and identify and develop the employment, training, or community work experience activities to which CalWORKs participants may be referred.

Support an equitable allocation of CalWORKs funds among counties based on relative need.

Support legislation to exempt the full value of one vehicle per household and/or a greater portion of a vehicle's value from the CalWORKs and Food Stamp vehicle asset limit to ensure that clients have dependable transportation.

Support the full funding CalWORKs Performance Incentives for Fiscal Year 2002-03.

Pursue a Statewide safety net to cover hardship cases, such as families with abused or neglected children, the disabled, emancipated foster youth at risk of homelessness, children, or parents who are not readily employable beyond the five-year limit on Federal TANF benefits, and adults who have complied with the work requirements, but are unable to find employment through no fault of their own.

Pursue expansion of the State's financial commitment to local welfare-to-work programs which promote self-sufficiency among welfare recipients/applicants, non-custodial parents of children receiving TANF benefits, and Food Stamp applicants/recipients.

Pursue the use by counties of TANF funds to provide employment-related services and support services to non-custodial parents of children receiving TANF benefits, as permitted under Federal law.

Pursue the State's provision a safety net for those families where a member may be disqualified from receiving TANF and Food Stamp benefits due to drug-related convictions, if that family member has successfully completed a qualified drug rehabilitation program and remains drug free, as demonstrated through periodic drug testing. This is especially critical for family reunification in order to prevent children from entering or remaining in the foster care system.

### 11.3 Welfare-to-Work Program

Support the provision of sufficient State matching funds (including in-kind contributions) to maximize the availability of Federal funding.

Support the pass through all Welfare-to-Work formula grant funds to the local workforce investment boards, which administer the program at the local level, after reimbursing its State administrative costs.

Support proposals which provide local flexibility and not impose any added requirement over the use of welfare-to-Work funds.

Support the allocation of Welfare-to-Work funds equitably to the local workforce investment boards, targeting no less than two-thirds of total available funds to private industry councils

which serve areas with high concentrations of poor people, based upon the most up-to-date poverty data.

#### 11.4 Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Support the pass through of the maximum amount of Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds in an equitable manner to local Workforce Investment Boards, which administer the program at the local level, and should not impose any added requirements over the use of Federal WIA Funds.

Support the consultation with local officials in modifying its Federal-mandated strategic five-year State plan and in establishing or modifying local performance measures.

Support that performance levels for all target populations (adult, dislocated workers and youth) are reasonable and do not penalize local areas which have relatively high unemployment rates and numbers of hard-to-employ persons, or which target employment and training services at hard-to-employ persons.

Support the use of all of the Governor's WIA set-aside dollars (15 percent discretionary funds) to provide workforce investment services in the State of California.

#### 11.5 Citizenship and Legalization Assistance

Support increased funding for citizenship assistance with priority for services given to immigrants who lost Federal benefits and to immigrants with special needs, such as the elderly and disabled. The State should equitably allocate citizenship assistance funds among counties based on the total number of legal immigrants, and also should allow the County to provide naturalization services in collaboration with community-based organizations.

Support funding to assist in the legalization of immigrants covered under the Legal Immigration and Family Equity Act.

#### 11.6 Domestic Violence

Support increased funding for services to domestic violence victims and their children, including increased funding for outreach, services, and identification of domestic violence victims and their families in unserved or under served populations.

Support proposals which create a separate State allocation for domestic violence services to CalWORKs recipients.

Support efforts to promote education and training in the area of domestic violence.

Support legislation that fosters coordination and collaboration between the various agencies that provide domestic violence services.

### 11.7 In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

Support legislation that would require the State to return to its 80 percent funding formula for IHSS wages and benefits, or that establishes some alternative mechanism to increase its ongoing program participation to a level that would guarantee IHSS wages of at least \$7.00 per hour.

### 11.8 Senior and Adult Services

Support increased funding for adult protective services to enable counties, which are mandated to provide services under State law, to ensure the safety and protection of abused and neglected elders and dependent adults.

The State must provide funding relating to adult protective services to counties before funding other agencies which have no state-mandated responsibilities.

Support increased IHSS funding with emphasis on respite care and establishing community-based, long-term care programs in the County.

Support legislation which provides increased State financial participation in IHSS public authority costs, including any increases in wages and benefits, and which would allow State funding of health benefits to exceed \$0.60 per hour without being contingent on hourly wages being increased to a level specified in State law.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that will provide a tax credit for individuals who provide in-home care for elderly parents or other family members.

Support legislation to provide State funding for emergency IHSS providers to allow recipients to continue to receive IHSS services when the regular provider becomes ill or is otherwise unavailable for work.

The State should provide full funding for the Special Circumstances Program to provide assistance to eligible, low-income aged, blind and disabled persons.

Support increased funding for aging programs such as Linkages, Multipurpose Senior Services Program, Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Centers, and Home Delivered Meals.

Support funding for construction, renovation and/or acquisition of centers serving senior citizens.

Support State funding for elder abuse forensic examination programs.

## **12. State-County Relationship**

Oppose any further erosion of the County's property tax, sales tax, locally-imposed tax or fee, or vehicle license fee revenue base.

Oppose legislation or regulation that would permit the transfer to Los Angeles County or its residents any costs or revenue losses incurred within another jurisdiction.

Support or sponsor a constitutional amendment that reallocates the property tax revenues derived from State-assessed properties to local school districts in exchange for a corresponding reallocation of non-ERAF property tax revenues derived from the local roll.

Support proposals to restructure State and local responsibilities if they create a nexus between authority, responsibility, accountability, and revenues, promote program effectiveness and cost containment, and recognize the limitations of County fiscal capacity by transferring programs with sufficient revenues, both in the first year and in future years.

Oppose program shifts to counties when control over those programs remains outside of the County.

Support proposals, legal avenues, and a constitutional amendment to secure return of the property taxes lost under ERAF.

Support proposals to cap ERAF growth as an interim measure pending full return of the property tax.

Oppose legislation that alters the definition of revenue neutrality in special cases, unless other entities are protected from unintended precedents with language justifying the need for special legislation.

### **13. Transportation**

Support legislation to increase the fines for rail transit right-of-way violations, making them comparable with red-light running and HOV fines.

Support legislation or budgetary actions that provide State funding for the 1989 Retrofit Sound Wall list.

Support proposals that provide the County with increase funding for pedestrian projects, such as crosswalks, lighting, and traffic control.

Support legislation or administrative actions that would provide additional dedicated funding for transportation requirements necessitated by Welfare-to-Work legislation.

Support legislation to increase the grade separation fund as long as it does not impact funding for regional transit programs and does not reduce funding the Department of Public Works receives from California Department of Transportation or gas tax revenues.

Support legislation that allocates funds directly to local government for the preservation of local streets and roads, without resulting in a loss of other transportation funds.



## **14. Utilities and Infrastructure**

### **14.1 Energy**

Support measures to conserve and expand California's energy supply through legislation that:

Expand electric generation and supply in California, including a waiver of air quality emission standards for California generation facilities when supply is critically low.

Provide an exemption to public agencies for emergency operation of energy generators when electrical blackouts are imminent.

Increase funding and provide incentives for public agencies to reduce consumption, develop alternative energy sources, and shift usage to non-peak hours.

Establish a grant program to fund electric retrofitting of publicly-owned buildings.

Permit municipal utilities to enter into agreements with neighboring public agencies currently served by an investor owned utility for the provision of electricity.

Allow local governments that produce power to serve their facilities utilizing the transmission lines of public or investor-owned utilities.

Regulates the scheduled maintenance of electric generation facilities.

Sponsor or support legislative and administrative measures that exempt and/or refund interruptible electric rate penalties applied against public entities.

Support funding for the purchase and installation of independent power sources for traffic signals.

Support proposals that assist low-income and elderly households with energy assistance, such as payment subsidies, conservation education, weatherization, and energy efficiency improvements.

### **14.2 Waste Management**

Support increased flexibility for local agencies to meet waste reduction goals established in the State Integrated Waste Management Act.

Support proposals that correct deficiencies in State waste disposal reporting requirements.

### **14.3 Telephone Services**

Support efforts to establish technology specific area codes intended to reduce the proliferation of area codes for regular telephone service.

Support measures to stop telemarketers by adding their name to a “Do Not Call” registry, with exemptions for emergency personnel and political parties for occasional voter contact.

**COUNTY-SPONSORED PROGRAM-SPECIFIC GOALS  
(Board Actions and Department Requests)**

**1. State Financial Assistance for Hollywood Special Reorganization Study**

California statute makes provision for special reorganizations, as defined, and establishes special study requirements for local agency formation commissions. Local agency formation commissions are largely funded by counties; however, to mitigate financial hardship upon the counties, the local agency formation commissions are empowered to impose fees upon entities filing for special reorganization. The special study requirements associated with a special reorganization are very costly, and would impose an undue financial hardship upon those filing an application. The Legislature acknowledged this in the cases of the San Fernando Valley and San Pedro areas and appropriated funds sufficient to offset 80 percent of the anticipated costs of the special studies. The Hollywood area has now filed an application for special reorganization. **Therefore, the County will seek legislation or budgetary action that would provide State funding for 80 percent of the anticipated costs of the local agency formation commission studies required for the Hollywood special reorganization.**

**2. Revise the Authority of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy and Modify Membership**

Last year, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 1625 (Murray), which created the Baldwin Hills Conservancy and established the jurisdiction and duties thereof. Within the measure are certain oversight and review responsibilities that jeopardize the County's ability to fulfill its existing contract responsibilities. The measure also provides the Conservancy with broad powers to acquire surplus property at cost from any other public entity. In addition, the measure gives the Conservancy jurisdiction over the Ballona Creek area where the County has existing responsibilities. The Board of Supervisors is not represented on the Conservancy. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation that reduces Conservancy oversight and review of existing contracts, limits its ability to acquire surplus property, deletes Ballona Creek from its jurisdiction, and designates the member of the Board of Supervisors, within whose district the majority of the Conservancy lies, to be a member of the Conservancy.**

**3. Probation Officer Access to School Records**

Existing law allows access to school records to "any probation officer or district attorney for the purpose of conducting a criminal investigation in regards to declaring a person a ward of the court or involving a violation of a condition of probation." Supervision of probationers is becoming more and more difficult and complex. Access to school records for case management and planning is an essential element in effective supervision. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County sponsor legislation that would broaden the circumstances under which probation officers can access school records.**

**4. Developing Increased Safety through Arms Recovery Management**

#### **(D.I.S.A.R.M.)**

The Probation Department supervises 70,000 cases with bench warrants and 30,000 cases that have search and seizure and/or not to possess weapons requirements as court-ordered conditions of probation. Increasing caseloads make it difficult for probation officers to proactively enforce compliance with search and seizure and not to possess weapons orders. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation authorizing a pilot project and a budgetary appropriation for a grant to fund the pilot program.**

#### **5. Franchise Fee Authority on Cable Television Systems**

Existing law provides that cable television company property be locally assessed for property tax purposes and that local governments may impose franchise fees upon cable television companies operating within their jurisdiction. The California Constitution provides that telephone companies will be assessed for property tax purposes by the State Board of Equalization (SBE). California statutes exempt telephone companies from local franchise fees. The SBE has indicated that it may assert assessment jurisdiction over cable television companies that also provide telephone service. While this action would be consistent with the Constitution, statute could prohibit local governments from continuing to collect franchise fees on the cable television portion of company activities. This situation would be corrected if cable companies were required to separately identify assets and income for the cable television and telephone portions of their business and the SBE's jurisdiction was limited to the telephone service portion of the company's activities. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County work with the SBE and cable industry to pursue legislation that would require cable television companies, which also provide telephone service, to separately identify the assets and income for each portion of their service and limit the SBE's assessment jurisdiction to only the telephone service portion of company operations.**

#### **6. Authority of the Court to Order an Extended Visit for a Dependent Child**

Existing case law prohibits a child welfare agency from sending a child home for an extended visit as part of a family reunification plan if the court has previously found that there exists a substantial risk to the safety, protection, or physical or emotional well being of the child, even when the parent or guardian has substantially complied with the case plan and/or where sufficient safeguards are in place. This makes it difficult to include trial visits in the reunification plan. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation that permits the court to allow extended visits by dependent children with their parents or guardians as part of a family reunification plan, and permits the court to order such conditions upon visitation as may be necessary to ensure the safety of the child.**

#### **7. Cancellation of Penalties and Interest on Overdue Property Taxes**

Existing property tax law holds the owner of record responsible for taxes due upon his or her property, including penalties and interest, even when the property is recently acquired and the tax bill was mailed to the prior owner. This situation does not normally occur on property sales that go through escrow. Being held responsible for penalties and interest upon tax obligations of which you had no knowledge is unfair. Claude Parrish, Chairman of the State Board of Equalization, has sent a letter to Los Angeles County requesting that your Board establish penalty cancellation policies pursuant to Section 2610.5 of the

Revenue and Taxation Code. Section 2610.5 allows each County to establish its own standards and procedures for canceling penalties and interest on tax bills mailed to the wrong owner. Since passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, the property tax is a uniform tax that should be uniformly applied Statewide. Procedures for the cancellation of penalties and interest should be uniform, just as are the procedures for issuing refunds and the payment of interest thereon. Better still, a uniform Statewide procedure should be established to ensure that new owners are notified of any tax obligations outstanding on property they have acquired. **Therefore, we should advise the State Board of Equalization that the County will support legislation that establishes a Statewide procedure for notifying property owners of outstanding tax obligations within a reasonable time period after conclusion of a property sale, and that penalties and interest will only be applied if the property owner then fails to pay on time, provided that mandate reimbursement is provided to counties.**

**8. State Education Funding for Los Angeles County College of Nursing**

The Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health, located at the LAC+USC Facility, is not part of a community college district, and is therefore, ineligible for State funding under the Education Code. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation amending the Education Code to permit the Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health to receive State funding as do nursing programs in community colleges, or alternatively seek funding for the College in the State budget.**

**9. Permit Municipal Utilities to Provide Electricity Service to Neighboring Public Agencies**

In light of the uncertainty of electricity cost and service, the County should pursue policies that advance its own interests of minimizing electrical costs and disruption of public services. **Since the Board has taken a position on this issue, the County will sponsor and/or support legislation that would permit municipal utilities to enter into agreements with neighboring public agencies for the provision of electricity service.**

**10. Chromium VI Contamination of the Water Supply**

The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) establishes Public Health Goals (PHGs) for various pollutants. OEHHA has established for drinking water a PHG of 2.5 parts per billion (ppb) for total Chromium and 0.2 ppb for Chromium VI. Despite these standards, the State permits Chromium in drinking water of levels up to 50 ppb, and has no specific standard for Chromium VI. **Therefore, we will pursue legislation that establishes a scientifically-based legal limit of total Chromium in drinking water supplies.**

**11. Interest Computations on Property Tax Refunds**

Existing law provides for the payment of interest on refunds of property taxes in certain circumstances, however, the law is unclear as to whether interest is to be calculated from the date of payment of each installment or from when the taxes are fully paid upon the second installment. Los Angeles County has historically paid interest from the date of payment of the second installment, while other counties have paid interest from the date

of payment of each installment. Litigation is currently pending against Los Angeles County over this issue (Bacon Case). While the calculation of interest from the date of payment of each installment may be more consistent with legislative intent, to change practices without clear legislative direction could leave the County vulnerable to challenge by other agencies receiving property tax allocations (cities, special districts, schools, redevelopment agencies). **Therefore, the County will pursue legislation clarifying that, prospectively, interest on property tax refunds shall be computed from the date of payment of each installment. Further, we will seek legislation clarifying that property tax refund issues are not to be the subject of class action suits.**

#### **12. Construction and Development of Child Care Facilities**

Recent studies demonstrate that there is a severe child care crisis in California. One of those studies indicates that, on a statewide basis, there may be only one licensed slot available for every five children in need. **Therefore, the County will sponsor or support legislation or budget actions for increased funding and incentives to lenders for the construction and development of licensed child care facilities in the areas where there is a shortage of licensed child care.**

#### **13. Clarification of Documentary Transfer Tax Application**

As a result of the deregulation of the electric industry, investor-owned utilities were required to sell off much of their generation capacity. Southern California Edison (Edison) sold off four generating plants in Los Angeles County to companies outside of California. Documentary Transfer Tax payments were required on these sales. Edison paid the documentary transfer tax on only that portion of the sale price that was equal to the "net book value" last shown by the State Board of Equalization. This resulted in Edison paying tax on only 50 percent of the total sales price. Litigation is pending to resolve this particular issue; however, legislative clarification is required to ensure that similar practices are not employed in other large sales. **Therefore, the County will pursue legislation that will clarify that documentary transfer taxes are applicable to the full sale price of real property.**

#### **14. Full Funding of Public Beach Restoration Act**

The Public Beach Restoration Act of 1999 (AB 64) was drafted with the intent of providing \$35 million per year for three years to replenish eroding beaches along the 1,100 miles of California coastline. The 2000-01 State Budget included \$10 million in funding for this purpose. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County pursue legislation or budgetary action that fulfills the legislative intent of the Public Beach Restoration Act funding in fiscal years 2001-02 and 2002-03.**

#### **15. Child Care Benefits for Former CalWORKs Clients**

A critical element of implementing welfare reform is the availability of supportive services to promote self-sufficiency. Studies have shown the critical unmet need for childcare for children supported by CalWORKs. Recently, the State has reduced CalWORKs childcare funding for former CalWORKs families. This will have a negative effect on many CalWORKs families, and will undermine their ability to achieve self-sufficiency. **Therefore, the County will sponsor or support legislation or budget actions that restores child care funding for former CalWORKs clients.**

## **16. Racially-restrictive Covenants**

Racially restrictive covenants appear in real estate title reports in areas where, historically, land owners were prohibited from selling property to ethnic minorities. Racially restrictive covenants were a means of discrimination that affected many minority families. In 2000, the State enacted legislation which requires the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) to determine whether any restrictive covenant violates the housing laws, upon request in writing from the landowner. If DFEH agrees that the restriction is illegal, the applicant will be allowed to strike out the void restriction and record the modified document. This process can take more than ninety days, and landowners should not be required to undergo this long process in order to remove a racially restrictive covenant from a land title. **Therefore, the County will sponsor or support legislation to allow any person holding an interest in a property to strike a racially restrictive covenant without the prior approval of the DFEH, and require the county recorder to refuse to record the document if, at the time it is submitted for recording, the restrictive covenant is identified by the recorder and has not been stricken.**

## **17. Child Product Safety**

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issues hundreds of recalls and safety notices on products such as toys and nursery furniture, annually. However, according to a study by the CPSC, recalled and banned products remain in use in child care facilities, and available through thrift and resale stores. In response, states have enacted legislation to prohibit the sale of recalled products, and their use in child care facilities. The Department of Consumer Affairs recommends California enact similar legislation. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County sponsor or support legislation which prohibits the sale and use of products recalled or banned by the CPSC.**

## **18. Social Workers' Access to Dependent Children's Medical and Counseling Records**

Section 317(g) of the Welfare and Institutions Code provides that counsel for dependent children may, under certain circumstances, invoke the psychotherapist-client privilege, physician-patient privilege and clergyman-penitent privilege on behalf of the child. Several attorneys who represent dependent children use this statute to restrict a social worker's access to the psychological, counseling and medical records of dependent children. Without access to these important assessments by mental health and medical professionals, social workers are unable to make case plan recommendations that reflect the mental health and medical needs of children in our care. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation that clarifies social workers' access to dependent children's medical and counseling records.**

## **19. Simplification of Notice Statutes for Dependency Hearings**

Currently, the notice statutes for the various dependency hearings are scattered throughout the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), California Rules of Court, the United States Code and the case law. The current notice statutes are also poorly written and in some instances conflict. Failure to properly notice parents of dependency proceedings not only deprives the parents of due process, but can also have devastating effects on children whose cases must then be continued, or in some instances, revert back to the initial dependency

hearings, both results causing a delay in permanence for the children. The creation of a more user-friendly section of the WIC will reduce the number of continuances of dependency proceedings and ensure the expeditious resolution of these children's status. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation that would organize and simplify the Welfare and Institutions Code notice statutes.**

**20. Funding for Dependent Children's Placement in For-Profit Group Homes**

California law prohibits reimbursement for placements in for-profit group homes. The Department of Children and Family Services is often unable to utilize Regional Center placement resources for Regional Center eligible youth because most of their resources are classified as for-profit group homes. Many of these youth remain at MacLaren for an extended period of time because of the seriousness of their mental health needs and a lack of appropriate placement resources. When a child is placed at MacLaren for more than 30 days, the County is responsible for 100 percent of that child's placement costs. **Therefore, it is recommended that the County seek legislation that would allow for State reimbursement for placements in for-profit group homes for dependent children who are eligible for regional center services when an appropriate not-for-profit facility is unavailable.**